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C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 001102

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DEPT FOR WHA/CCA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/27/2017

TAGS: [CU](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: CUBAN DISSIDENT LEADER ANTUNEZ WANTS MEDICAL
EVALUATION IN USA

REF: A. HAVANA 1081

[1](#)B. HAVANA 1087 HAVANA 1094

Classified By: COM: Michael E. Parmly: For reasons 1.4 b/d

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Further to Reftel, dissident figure Jorge Luis Garcia Perez ("Antunez") left the Hospital in Havana because he did not want to undergo the exploratory surgery recommended by the doctors. Cuban medical staff did a large number of tests but the results were inconclusive as to identifying the cause of the fainting episode that provoked the admission. Antunez has consulted with close colleagues in the dissident movement. He recognizes that he has serious health problems. Antunez stated that he does not have confidence in the local system to provide appropriate care and wishes to seek a comprehensive medical evaluation in the US. See para 5 action request. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) After performing a battery of tests, the doctors at Havana's Hospital Nacional recommended that Antunez have a cardiac angiogram, an exploratory surgery to detect the severity of any blockages or damage to the heart. Doctors had diagnosed an arterial blockage, which by itself it is not a matter of acute concern. Antunez discussed his situation extensively with trusted colleague Martha Beatriz Roque as well as noted neuro-surgeon Dr. Hilda Molina. Dr. Molina reviewed the tests and stated that the request for an angiogram was a logical next step in treating the patient. Antunez, however, was fearful of having an invasive procedure performed in Cuba, and so decided to leave the hospital.

[1](#)3. (C) Antunez told COM late in the day of November 27 that he recognizes the risks and wants a thorough review of his medical condition outside of Cuba. After discussion, he decided to delay plans to return to his home in Villa Clara province. He now recognizes the gravity of the situation. He has been in touch with Dr. Alzugaray of the Miami Medical Mission. He wishes to travel to the US for a comprehensive medical assessment as long as the Cuban government guarantees

that he can return. However, he has no idea of either where he would go for care or how to pay for the expenses.

¶4. (C) USINT FSHP has met with Antunez and reviewed his file. She thinks that, in addition to a review of the brain, heart and blood tests performed in Cuba, he would need to see an internal medicine specialists, a thyroid exam as well as a checks by pulmonary and infectious disease specialist concerning the status of the tuberculosis that he was exposed to in prison.

¶5. (C) Comment and Action Request: Post would appreciate the Department inquire about the options for funding travel per diem and the costs of a medical evaluation of Antunez, one of Cuba's most committed and dynamic opposition leaders.
PARMLY